

# IMMANUEL

## ISAIAH 8:7-10

When we think of Christmas we envision cozy images of folks stringing decorations - friends singing carols - families exchanging presents under the tree.

But an interesting irony of history is the number of harsh military conflicts that were fought at Christmas...

One of the most acclaimed victories of the American Revolution occurred when Washington's Continental Army crossed the Delaware River on Christmas Day to surprise German mercenaries at the Battle of Trenton..

When Tecumseh Sherman and Union Troops ended their march to the sea with the capture of Savannah, Sherman telegraphed the White House presenting the southern port as a Christmas gift to President Lincoln..

Christmas 1916 saw a terribly brutal World War 1 battle between Russia and Germany in the forests of Latvia. The Germans thought the Russians would celebrate Christmas, instead they attacked in the cold and snow. As many men died from frostbite as combat.

And in 1972, in an attempt to hasten the end of the Vietnam War, President Richard Nixon ordered the infamous Christmas Bombing of Hanoi. He was severely criticized for dropping 20,000 tons of bombs on the city. Yet the campaign worked. The new year saw North Vietnam return to the table and sign a treaty.

My point is, despite the message of hope that the Christmas season brings, more often than not, Christmas and war have been regular companions.

In fact, the first Christmas was quickly followed by King Herod's brutal and barbaric attack on the babies of Bethlehem. The slaughter was a jealous reaction to the worship of the wise men at the feet of King Jesus.

For several weeks we've been searching the scroll of Isaiah for prophetic glimpses of the Christmas story, and Isaiah has not disappointed. In several prophecies he's seen the coming of the Savior far, far in advance.

And in Chapter 8, he does it again. Isaiah connects the Christmas story to *a vicious army, a brutal siege, a broken people, a bloody conflict, but a surprise victory*. The Prophet pictures war and Christmas hand in hand.

This AM, I want to recount one of the most important stories in the OT. And the OT is full of famous, inspiring narratives. [Moses at the Red Sea](#), [Joshua's defeat of Jericho](#), [Daniel in the Lion's Den](#), etc. e... But there's one story that's equally dramatic, and yet it draws far less notoriety... and that's [Hezekiah and the Angel](#).

This story was so important God recorded it three times in Scripture - [2 Kings 19](#), [2 Chronicles 32](#), [Isaiah 37](#). The event is also referred to by other prophets and in the book of Psalms. In fact, the story's background and unfolding is in our text this morning, [Isaiah 7-9](#).

Here's the account in a nutshell... The Assyrian army is on a rampage. After blitzkrieg sieges of Syria's capitol, Damascus - and Israel's capitol, Samaria - the Assyrians set their sights on Judah's capitol, Jerusalem. In 701 BC they put the city under siege.

At least 185,000 troops camped outside Jerusalem's walls poised to strike. For comparison, 200,000 troops would be about the population of Columbus, GA. The Assyrian king hoped the mere threat of such a vast army would intimidate the Jews into surrender. His hope was to conquer Jerusalem without firing a shot.

But that's not what happened. *Isaiah the prophet* and *Hezekiah the king* dropped to their knees, and prayed to their God for a miracle. The people of Jerusalem went to bed one night on the brink of annihilation, but the next morning they awoke to a stunning surprise.

In the night, an angel of the Lord fought for Judah. A single, battle-hardened angel - a one-angel wrecking crew - slaughtered 185,000 seasoned Assyrian troops.

[2 Kings 19:35](#) provides us the play-by-play, "On a certain night that the angel of the Lord went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses - all dead." I love that line. Talk about stating the obvious, *most corpses are dead!*... But this writer is in a state of shock. He can't believe what he sees.

For weeks he's been looking over the walls at ferocious troops, but this time he can't believe his eyes, the valley is littered with dead Assyrian soldiers!

[2 Kings 19](#) finishes, "So [Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned home](#) (he tucked tail and ran), [and remained.](#)" It was an embarrassing, devastating defeat that sent the proud king reeling.

English author, George Byron, immortalized the Angel's victory over Sennacherib and Assyria in a poem... "[The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold, and his](#)

cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold. And the sheen of their spears were like stars on the sea, when the blue waves roll nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green, that host with their banners at sunset were seen. Like the leaves of the forest when autumn has blown, that host on tomorrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread His wings on the blast, and breathed in the face of the foe as he passed. And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill, and their hearts, once heaved, forever grew still!"

And there lay the soldiers distorted and pale, with the dew on their brow, and the rust on their mail. And their tents were all silent, their banners alone, the lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the Assyrian widows are loud in their wail, and the idols are broke in the temple of Baal. And the might of the Gentile, un-smote by the sword, has melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!" It was a mighty triumph by Yahweh of the Hebrews, the one true God!

### ***But what makes this a Christmas story, you ask?***

Well, it's the name Isaiah attaches to the Angel of the Lord who does the *defending*, and *fighting*, and *killing*.

We know in Hebrew the term "angel" simply means "messenger," whether human or divine. And in this passage Isaiah gives this messenger, "the angel of the LORD" an interesting name. In fact, it's the Christmas name - the name later ascribed to Jesus, "*Immanuel*."

That's what we find in Chapter 8. Let's read it and I'll provide some running commentary, that'll help us follow the action. In Isaiah 8, the Prophet is acting like a war correspondent... a reporter imbedded among the troops as the conflict unfolds. Let's begin in verse 7...

"Now therefore, behold the Lord brings up over them the waters of the River, strong and mighty - the king of Assyria and all his glory; he will go up over all his channels and go over all his banks." The strong river is the Euphrates, and its capitol of Nineveh. Nineveh was the home of the mighty Assyrian empire - with its ambitious kings and their fast and ferocious troops.

The Assyrian army had marched across the Fertile Crescent like a tidal wave. Their troops had poured into the land of Israel and Judah like a devastating tsunami.

Verse 8 tells us, "He will pass through Judah, he will overflow and pass over..." The Invader camped in the south - the area of Judah - at the gates of Jerusalem.

And “He will reach up to the neck...” The Assyrian army will put a choke hold on Jerusalem. The enemy will strangle God’s people. They’ll be overwhelmed.

Like a huge vulture stretching out its wings, hovering over its prey, the Assyrians will swarm the holy land. *And notice to whom the Assyrian threat is directed.* Verse 8, “And the stretching out of his wings will fill the breadth of Your land, O Immanuel.” *Immanuel?* Isn’t that the Christmas baby... *the reason for the season? How is Mary’s Infant connected to an ancient battle?*

It’s a provocative thought, but notice, though He wasn’t yet born, Jesus was already a property owner. Isaiah refers to the land as “Your land, O Immanuel.”

Of course this is a truth with modern implications. The land currently being fought over in the Middle East, the land we call *Israel, Gaza, the West Bank, the Golan Heights* - it doesn’t belong to either Jews or Arabs. The name on God’s deed is “Immanuel.” It’s His land to give to whom He chooses. And Jesus will prove it when He returns to earth to set up His kingdom.

It’s interesting though in Isaiah 8, Jesus isn’t born for 700 years, yet Isaiah warns Assyria that the owner of the land they’ve invaded might not be happy with their intrusion! They don’t want to anger “Immanuel.”

Isaiah goes on, verse 9, “Be shattered, O you peoples, and be broken in pieces! Give ear, all you from far countries. Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces.” The Prophet teaches the Earth’s nations, “Look at what’s happened. Because of their rebellion, Israel is shattered and broken. Judah and Jerusalem armed and girded themselves, yet were still brought under siege. *And if God isn’t wary of judging His own people, why would He hesitate in judging other nations?*

Verse 10 is directed to the invading Assyrians, “Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing; speak the word, but it will not stand, for God is with us.” And what does this phrase, “God is with us,” mean in Hebrew? Again, it’s “Immanuel.” It’s the name given to Jesus.

It was Jesus who made sure the counsel and the battle plans of the Assyrians came to nothing - that the orders barked out by their generals, would “not stand.” It was the yet-to-be-born Jesus, the “Immanuel,” who defeated Assyria and delivered the city of Jerusalem!

Remember the Christmas text, the Gospel writer, Matthew, quotes the Hebrew prophet, Isaiah. Matthew 1:22 recites Isaiah 7:14. After the angel had appeared to Joseph, Matthew explains, “Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ‘Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,’ which is translated, ‘God with us.’”

Matthew alerts **his Gentile readers** to the gravity of this Child by translating His Hebrew name, “Immanuel” as “God with us.” The baby conceived in Mary’s womb was *God incarnate - God come to Earth in flesh and blood and bone*. Jesus was *the God-man*.

But Matthew was communicating far more than that. For **his Jewish readers** - those familiar with their nation’s history - the name “*Immanuel*” meant more. It harkened back to King Hezekiah and the Prophet Isaiah, and the Assyrian invasion of Judah. *Immanuel* was God’s answer to a national calamity of life and death significance. *Immanuel* was a Hebrew hero!

Imagine the carpenter, Joseph, when he heard the Angel say the name, “*Immanuel*.” Joseph was a good Jew familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures. He knew the prophecy in Isaiah. *What went through his mind when he heard that Mary’s baby was the Ancient Warrior?*

One thing is for sure, it made God’s humility, *that Immanuel would become an infant*, the more amazing! The Baby, Joseph held in his arms, had once held a sword, and slaughtered a city-size army of angry men.

Here’s the part of the Christmas story that seldom gets told. Mary’s baby was not a newcomer. He had been here before. **The Babe had been to battle.**

To really appreciate Christmas we have to leave Bethlehem and travel three miles north to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was *God’s city* - the Jews were *God’s people* - Hezekiah *God’s king* - Isaiah *God’s prophet* - and Assyria’s king, Sennacherib was *God’s enemy*.

At Christmastime warm fires and blinking lights are common sights. But from the walls of Jerusalem, the only flickering lights the Jews could see were the campfires of an army of assassins readying for battle.

There were no reindeer-drawn sleighs - only war chariots. Sennacherib was the general of a bloodthirsty army. The mighty Assyrian juggernaut had moved into place at lightning speed. Nation after nation had fallen.

The major cities north of Jerusalem - *Hamath, Arpad, Damascus, and Samaria* had all been conquered. Now the Assyrians had their sights set on Jerusalem.

Realize, the ruthless Assyrians had turned cruelty and intimidation into an art form. When they conquered a city they made examples of their defeated foes. They would skin their prisoners alive (*like you would a fish*).

Cut off hands, feet, ears, noses - even pluck out eyes, and pull out tongues. These Assyrian butchers lopped off heads and pile up mounds of skulls outside a city's gates just to terrorize the neighbors. It was their way to send the message, "*You are about to be next.*"

Supposedly Hitler's torturers derived inspiration from ancient Assyria. Rape, pillage, brutality were their only ambitions. With Assyria on the warpath this was not a time of "*peace on earth and goodwill toward men.*"

One of Assyria's chief wartime tools was propaganda. Sennacherib had such a fierce reputation he was often able to bully and frighten cities into surrender... *And this was his strategy with Jerusalem.*

He sent his spokesman to scare the Jews and their king into capitulation. In 2 Kings 18 He reasoned with them, "*Has any of the gods of the nations delivered its land from the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Who among the gods of the lands have delivered their countries from my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem?*"

Here's Sennacherib logic, *all of Assyria's defeated foes had prayed to their gods for deliverance; yet none had come to the rescue. Why did the Jews think their situation or their god would be any different? How dare Jerusalem's citizens assume they were more righteous than their neighbors, or their god more real and vital?*

Sennacherib's spokesman is acting like a modern spokesman. He's **politically correct**. He's adhering to **the fairness doctrine** - giving *all nations* and *all religions* equal treatment. Sennacherib's propagandist echoes today's mantra, "**Don't dare exalt one belief or god above another!**" Heaven forbid we ever imply one man's religion is superior to someone else's religion, or that another religion is wrong. *Let's not offend anyone!*

This is what bothers me at Christmas time. People are so concerned with offending, they're reluctant to even say, "**Merry Christmas.**" It's "**Winter Break**" or "**Happy Holidays.**" A friend of mine told me a waitress saw her Christmas pin, and whispered to

her, “**Merry Christmas.**” Then she said she had to be cautious uttering those forbidden words - lest she lose her job.

Every year it blows my mind the extremes to which folks go to skirt around the mention of Christmas. There’s the “**After Thanksgiving**” sales. *Oh, I wonder what comes after Thanksgiving?* “**Only 25 shopping days left...**” *until when?* Advertisers refused to even finish the sentence... One year, Amazon had a “Twelve Days of Holiday” sale... Macy’s “The More the Merrier Sale,” but left us to wonder “*Merrier than What?*”...

And Old Navy wasn’t even close with its “Extravaganza humongous honkin’ three day BIG weekend sale.” That to me is the ultimate insult, the birth of the Christ eclipsed by a “*honkin’ weekend sale.*”

This equal treatment policy people observe today is the same mistake made by Sennacherib and Assyria. No one ever asks, **what if all religions are not equal?**

Sennacherib was knocking off nations *one after the other* - exposing fraudulent gods *one after the other* - proving the futility of people's prayers *one after the other*. But he failed to consider that he could attack a city *whose God was real and whose God had power to save!* Sennacherib’s oversight was about to cost him...

*Hezekiah prayed and Isaiah prophesied* that God would come to defend His people. Isaiah had already given the house of David a sign. In 7:14, “**The virgin shall conceive and bear a Son...**” Isaiah 9:6 mentions Him again, “**Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder.**”

And this special Child was on the scene at the time of Isaiah. As the Angel of the Lord - the pre-Bethlehem, pre-incarnate Son of God - Jesus had come to avenge God’s people and fight for the holy city. In Chapter 8 Isaiah speaks of God’s warrior by name, “**Immanuel.**”

Again in 8:8 Isaiah predicts “**(Sennacherib) will pass through Judah, He will overflow... (and) fill the breadth of Your land, O Immanuel.**” The overflowing Assyrian army will finally meet its match - *in Immanuel’s land..*

In the next verses Isaiah taunts the Assyrians, “**Gird yourselves, but be broken to pieces. Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing; speak the word, but it will not stand, for God is with us.**” or **Immanuel!** Despite their tactics, Immanuel will save the day!

2 Kings 19, the passage we read earlier, describes a night you've probably never associated with Christmas time. God sends His mighty warrior - no doubt Isaiah's *Immanuel* - into the camp of Assyria with sword drawn.

And when the day dawns, 185,000 corpses lay on the battlefield. Immanuel had saved His people. Despite Sennacherib's propaganda the God of the Jews, the God in Jerusalem, *Immanuel*, was able and willing to defend His people, and overpower Assyria.

We learn from Sennacherib that if you just assume, and don't pay attention to *the moves you take* and *the decisions you make* you can get into real trouble.

Sennacherib was just cruising through life taking out cities, kings, false gods... *He never once dreamed he would run into the one, true God.* Fake gods were no match for Sennacherib, but everything changed in "*Immanuel's land.*" Immanuel cut him down to size.

And here's the part of the Christmas story you really need to know. Mary's baby was *Immanuel* - the warrior of Isaiah's day that proved the Hebrew God was true and dispensed with the evil Assyrians. The babe Mary *laid in the manger hay*, had already *made hay* in battle.

Seven centuries earlier the Babe of Bethlehem came brandishing a sword. *With fire in His eyes* and *justice in His heart* - Jesus flashed His steel, and by the time He returned it to its scabbard it dripped with rebel blood...

This first blood Jesus spilt was not His own. *Before Mary's baby cried, He had already yelled a battle cry!*

Folks today can be like Sennacherib - cruising along treating all religions as equals... *Don't all paths lead to God? Don't all religions worship the same God? As long as you're sincere in your belief, aren't you fine?*

*Muslims pray to Allah... Buddhists look to the Buddha... Hindus pray to Vishnu... Mormons think they'll become their own gods... And Christians trust in Jesus... Hey, what's the big deal? Nobody has a monopoly on God? But here is the really big deal! One of those religions just might actually be right!*

And in your attempt not to offend anybody you might commit the greatest sin of all, and offend the one true God before whom, one day, every knee will bow!

This is the mistake Sennacherib made. He thumbed his nose at the true God in heaven, and God sent Immanuel to cut down a proud man. Reject or ignore Jesus and you can get yourself into serious trouble.

It's interesting to me that just before Jesus was born God identified Him to Joseph as "*Immanuel*" - and Matthew recorded that strategic detail in Scripture. It's a notation that could've just as easily been excluded. But it was vital to God for it to be documented.

For when Joseph held that baby, God wanted him to know Who he was actually holding! Surely, without this detail, Joseph would've marveled at God's humility. The Almighty became a man - *what compassion*. But since it was "*Immanuel*," Joseph knew the baby in his arms was not only *humble*, He knew how to *rumble*!

Twelve years later when Joseph found Jesus in the Temple, teaching the Jewish scholars, I'm sure he recalled that Jesus had taught the Assyrians a lesson or two... Even later, when Jesus took a whip and ran the greedy priests out of the Temple, I'm sure someone saw a little of *Immanuel* rise up within Him... And when Romans crucified Jesus it perplexed the disciples, knowing He didn't have to take a beating. *Immanuel* could've as easily dished one out! Yet He bore the pain, *as if sacrificing for someone else*... And three days later when He rose from the dead suddenly everyone realized *Immanuel* had been at war, but with a different Sennacherib. Jesus had defeated death...

Here's the deal with Jesus... *He's a baby in the manger, a teacher in the Temple, a righteous prophet, a sacrifice for the world as He hangs on a cross*, but look in His rearview mirror and Jesus is *Immanuel*.

He desperately desires to save us - *He's been dying to prove it*... but if we rebel against Jesus, He's not afraid to pull the switch, and bring down God's judgment. *He's done it before, and He'll do it again*...

*And before we move on from Christmas into a New Year* this is the message we all need to realize. Jesus is not someone to ignore, or marginalize, or trivialize, or dismiss as irrelevant or obsolete. Don't ever make the mistake that Jesus is like any other god...

Jesus was a teacher, a healer, a servant, a miracle-worker, even our sacrifice. But Jesus is more than all the above. He is *Immanuel* - He's both Lord and King. He enforces righteousness and He punishes evil.

Jesus is patient now, but one day every human who's ever lived - great or small, high or low - will give an account of their lives to Jesus. As the old man, Simeon, said when he saw the baby Jesus in the Temple, "*Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel*..." In fact, *this Child* will decide the eternal destiny of every human who's ever lived.

Please don't let Christmas lull you to sleep. In a sense, it's a *quaint story* about a birth, a baby, a manger, a star, some shepherds... but it's also a *war story* - about a rough and ready Warrior who invades hostile territory to retrieve what belongs to Him - what was stolen from Him by greedy, selfish, sinful people.

The Christmas story that starts so innocently, ends violently - *and I'm not talking about the crucifixion*. No, Jesus will throw the last punch in this fight. He allowed the Romans to beat Him up and nail Him to a cross for our salvation. But He will never take a beating again.

Next time Jesus will dish one out. His punching bag days are over. *Immanuel* will do battle one final time.

Flash ahead to Revelation 19... It's a day yet future. Heaven will open and we'll see Jesus. He's the good guy. He comes riding on a white war horse. It will have been a long time since Jesus walked this Earth - since He bled and died to earn our forgiveness. And since then Jesus has been doing all He can, through His Spirit, to convince us to repent and turn to Him.

But here's the truth. Most people don't want to follow Jesus, or anyone for that matter. They're proud, selfish, stubborn. They want to control their own lives. And it's their sinful stubbornness that will send them to hell...

We're told in Revelation 19 Jesus will return to Earth, and the nations will rally against Him. Folks don't want Jesus to rule over them, so they'll fight against Him.

And Revelation tells us, He doesn't back down. *"In righteousness He judges and makes war."* With fire in His eye - and with crowns on His head - and with His clothes splattered with His enemy's blood - and with a sharp sword protruding from His mouth - once more *Immanuel* will go to battle flashing a deadly sword.

Realize, Jesus didn't start this fight. It was man who rebelled. God *didn't* and *hasn't* stopped loving mankind. Man started this brawl, but Jesus will end it.

Jesus doesn't care about woke sensibilities and political correctness. *Offending* is not His worry. The Bible tells us Jesus ends this battle by crushing His opposition. The manger baby returns to destroy the folks who dare to resist Him. Revelation 20 tells us He throws the rebels into **Hell**, along with the devil himself.

And I can hear the objections... *"I can't believe you're saying a loving God - the Christmas Child no less - would send anyone to hell!"* Some people could never imagine *the Baby Jesus* doing such a thing! But don't be naive. The *"Baby Jesus"* is *"Immanuel."*

And let me say, a loving God has no other choice but to send certain people to hell - *if He's truly loving...*

In reality, God doesn't send anyone to hell. Folks choose themselves to go. Hell was never intended for humans. Jesus said God created Hell for Satan and his demons. People make wrong choices to end up in Hell.

The Bible teaches **Jesus will forgive anyone from anywhere who's done anything... If you bow to Him.**

But if you think you're smarter than God - that Jesus is too narrow - that you're going to live life your own way - then God will send you to a place where that's accepted and desired behavior. And that place is Hell.

If you hate Jesus and don't want to follow Him - how is it *loving* for God to make you go to heaven where you'll spend all day, every day loving, and obeying, and serving Jesus? That would be cruel and unusual punishment. Hey, if you choose to distance yourself from Jesus, God will give you exactly what you choose. You'll spend eternity as far from Him as possible.

It's interesting when Jesus walked this Earth He did nothing but love people, and forgive people - serve, and heal, and give to people... yet evil men killed Him.

When Jesus returns to Earth He'll come to redeem and restore. He'll establish righteousness and peace. *He'll come again with good intentions!* Yet once more evil people will rally against Him and try to kill Him.

Revelation 20 fast-forwards to the distant future. By now Jesus has reigned over Earth for a thousand years. It's a utopia, a paradise. Yet the devil is let out of Hell for a short season, *and guess what men do?* They rally to Satan and rebel against God. And again, try to kill Jesus. I'm just saying, *some people are incorrigible.*

What does God do with folks who resist change and refuse to love Jesus? Do you want unrepentant rapists, pedophiles, serial killers, thieves in heaven with you forever? That's not heaven, *it's hell.* A loving God has to stop sinful people once and for all, or He's not loving to the rest of us. **Hell is sin's only logical solution.**

And if you still have a problem with Hell I'm going to ask you to be honest... If you were in Jerusalem and Hezekiah was your king - and the vile and vicious Assyrians were outside the walls preparing to *invade your city, and burn down your house, and torture you, and rape your wife, and take your kids into slavery...* Would you believe in a hell for them? I think you would.

The word “Immanuel” means *God with us*. That’s God’s desire. But hell is the choice to be *without God...*

I know it’s still the Christmas season! And you want to think about “On earth peace, goodwill toward men.”

*But don’t you want to know the whole story?* Jesus is no longer the baby in the manger. He’s all grown up now. Jesus has climbed out of that manger and He’s on the back of a white horse getting ready to return.

In Matthew 21:44 Jesus compared Himself to a rock. He said, “Whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”

When my kids were little we’d wrestle, and if one of the kids fell on me, *no problem...* But if I fell on one of my kids, they ended up crying. A 200 pound dad can hurt. Likewise, come broken to Jesus and He’ll provide a soft landing, but come prideful and you’ll be broken.

In the last chapter of your Bible Jesus declares, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last...” This means that our Lord Jesus is to be the last and final word of God to man.

Everyone who comes after Jesus is a deceiver. Everyone who contradicts Jesus is a false god... that includes Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Mormonism, Jehovah Witnesses, the Oprah Channel - *you name it!*

Jesus is as exclusive as it gets. Jesus didn’t say, “I am *one way*,” He said, “I am *the way, the truth, and the life*. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

I know it’s not politically correct - *and I like that we live in a free society, where you can have your own opinion, even if you’re wrong* - **but someone needs to be concerned with offending God and tell the truth!**

The Assyrians discovered not all religions and gods are equal. There is a true God they had not counted on. I pray you don’t make that same miscalculation...

So when you look in the Bethlehem manger recall when that baby first cried, *it may’ve been a battle cry!*